

OFFICE MEMORANDUM - UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : ADSO

DATE: 15 December 1949

FROM : COMMO

SUBJECT: Electronic Surveillance

1. A study of the equipment involved and the nature of work done by the Electronic Surveillance Unit indicates that this unit possibly should be a part of some Division of this Agency other than Communications. This is particularly true when it is considered that the actual mission of the OSO Communications Division is the provision and handling of RAPID communications.

2. When this definition of the mission of this Division is used, it becomes readily apparent that the obtaining of records electronically of conversations and discussions is not in any sense pertinent to rapid communications. The only possible connection with this Division that the Surveillance Unit can be said to have is the fact that electronic recording devices happen to use vacuum tubes and wires in their make-up. It appears that for this reason the handling of electronic surveillance fell by chance rather than design to the Engineering Section of the Communications Division.

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3. After a discussion with [redacted], it certainly appears that this Unit has more in common with the Operational Aids Division and its work could be more closely correlated with other Operational Aids activities if the Unit were transferred in toto to that Division. In connection with such a transfer, the following arrangements should be considered:

a. Setting up of slots in the T/O of the Operational Aids Division for 3 or 4 recording engineers.

b. The transfer of the three engineers presently occupying Radio Engineer slots in the Engineering Section to the OAD T/O.

c. Transfer of all surveillance equipment and projects, including research and development items, to the cognizance of the Chief of OAD.

d. An agreement in writing assuring the Chief of OAD that maintenance support will be furnished by technically competent members of the Communications Division in the field when required.

e. Modification of existing directives to transfer responsibility for surveillance activities within OSO from the Chief of COMMO to the Chief, OAD.

4. In view of the present reorganization of the Departmental T/Os, which is now in progress, it is suggested that this transfer of functions be taken into consideration in connection with this reorganization.

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Approved: [redacted]

/s/ [redacted]